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QUICK REVISION MODULE ( UPSC PRELIMS 2024) ART & CULTURE

# RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY-1

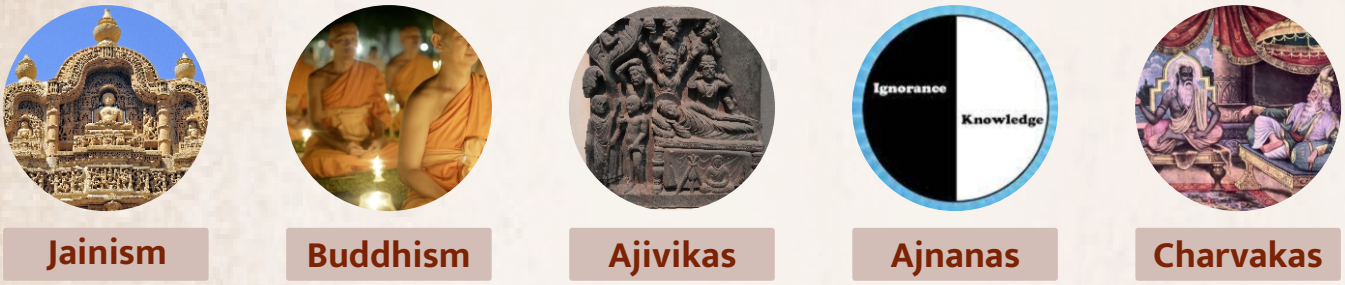
## SHRAMANA SCHOOLS

- Sramana, meaning **"seeker,"** was a tradition that began around 8th-6th century BCE when new philosophical groups, who believed in a more austere path to spiritual freedom, **rejected** the authority of the Brahmins and Vedas (forming Heterodox Schools of Indian Philosophy).
- It refers to several Indian religious movements parallel to Vedic religion.
- The Sramana traditions subscribe to diverse philosophies, and at times significantly disagree with each other, as well as with orthodox Hinduism and its six schools of Hindu philosophy.

# Origin and Evolution

- The term Shrama in early Vedic literature (e.g. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad) is predominantly used as an epithet for the Rishis and other monk like lifestyle.
- During its later semantic development, the term came to refer to several non-Brahmanic ascetic movements and non-vedic religion ( forming Heterodox Schools of Indian Philosophy)

**Various Shramana Schools / Heterodox Schools of Indian Philosophy**




Jainism | Buddhism | Ajivikas | Ajnanas | Charvakas

# Ajivikas

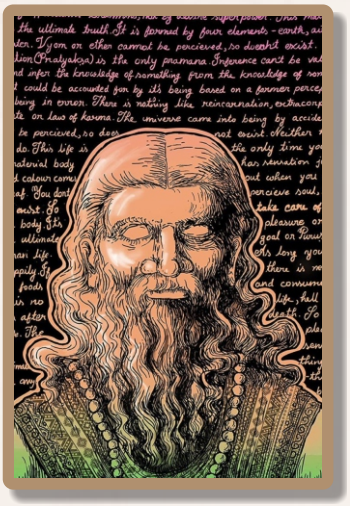
- The school was founded by **Makkhali Gosala** in **5th century BC.**
- The school revolves around the **Niyati (Fate) doctrine** of absolute determinism.
- It does not believe in **free will and Karma.**
- It is based on the theory of atoms and believes that everything is composed of atoms
- Ajivikas led a simple ascetic life.
- They **opposed Buddhism** and Jainism and were atheists.
- They **consider Karma a fallacy.**
- They **believed in the existence of soul (atman) in material form** (unlike formless soul of Jainism)
- **Bindusara (4th Century BC)** was one of its followers.
- **Savathi (Sravasti)** in Uttar Pradesh is believed to be the centre of Ajivikas.
- **Ashoka's 7th pillar edicts** mention about Ajivikas.
- The texts of Ajivika sect is non-existing at present.

Barabar caves: The Ajivikas

## Ajnanas

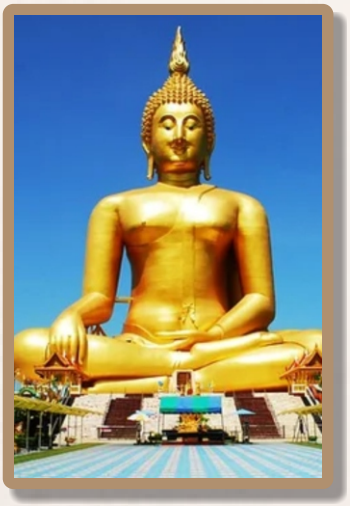
- The ajnana sect believed in **radical skepticism.**
- The school believed that it is impossible to attain knowledge about nature. Even if it is possible, it is useless for attaining salvation.
- This school was a major rival of Jainism and Buddhism.
- They believed that **"Ignorance is Best".**

## Charvaka School or Lokayata Philosophy



- **Brihaspati** laid the foundation stone of this school.
- This Schoolwas the main propounder of the **materialistic view to achieve salvation.**
- Other name: Lokyata Philosophy
- They denied the existence of any supernatural or divine agent .
- They argued **against the need to achieve salvation.**
- The Charvakas do not consider **'ether'** as one of the five essential elements as it cannot be experienced through the perception.
- They propound thetheory of 'eat, drink and make merry'.

## Buddhism



- The origin of Buddhism is attached to the story of **Siddhartha** who came to be known as **Buddha.**
- It is the **world's fourth largest religion** (Around **7%** of the world's population and **0.7%** of India's population) after Christianity, Islam and Hinduism.

## Concepts and Philosophy under Buddhism

The basic tenets of Buddhism are explained through the four major Noble truths. They are:

1. The truth of suffering **(Dukkha)**
2. The truth of the origin of suffering **(Samudāya)**
3. The truth of the cessation of suffering **(Nirodha)**
4. The truth of the path to the cessation of suffering **(Magga)**.

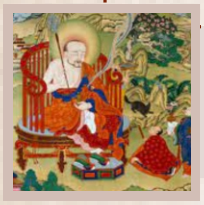
# The triple Jewel

- The Buddha (the guide)
- The Dharma (the Path)
- The Sangha (the companions and teachers)

## Prominent Boddhisattvas under Buddhism include

- **Avalokitesvara:** manifests Buddha's compassion.
- **Vajrapani:** manifests Buddha's Power.
- **Manjusri:** manifests Buddha's wisdom.
- **Samantabhadra:** Together with the Buddha and Manjusri,he forms the **Shakyamuni trinity** in Buddhism.
- **Ksitigarbha:** He took vow not to achieve Buddhahood till the hell is completely emptied.
- **Maitreya:** A **future Buddha** who will appear on Earth in the future, achieve complete enlightenment, and teach the pure dharma. **Laughing Buddha** is said to be an incarnation of Maitreya.
- **Akasagarbha:** associated with element of space.
- **Tara:** associated with **Vajrayana Buddhism**. Buddhist saviour-goddess with numerous forms. She is the feminine counterpart of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara.
- **Skanda:** Guardian of viharas and the Buddhist teachings.

## Prominent personalities associated with Buddhism

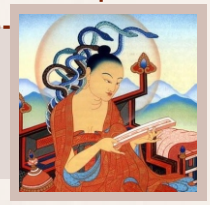


**Nagasena**

- Author of book Milinda Panho around 150 BC.

**Nagarjuna**

- (150 AD-250 AD) founder of the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism

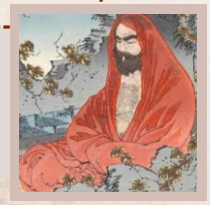


**Vasubandhu**

- A proponent of Mahayana Buddhism who wrote from the perspectives of the Sarvastivada and Sautrantika schools.

**Bodhidharma**

- He (5th-6th century AD) transmitted Buddhism to China.



**Buddhaghosa**

» A 5th-century Indian Theravada Buddhist commentator famous for his work Visuddhimagga (Path of Purification).

**Padmasambhava**

» He is contemplated as 'second Buddha' across Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Himalayan States of India.

**Atisa**

» A Buddhist Bengali religious leader and master , played major role in the spread of 11th-century Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism in Asia.

## Trans-national Buddhist circuit from India to Nepal

**Kushinagar:** The place where Lord Buddha fell ill and died in 543 BC.

**Vashali:** This was the place where Lord Buddha give his last sermon.

**Bodhgaya:** Located in Bihar, this is the place where Prince Siddharth Found enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree.

**Sarnath:** This is the place where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon.

**Rajgir:** was the Lord's monsoon retreat for 12 years. While spreading his doctrine, he preached about the precepts of Lotus Sutra and the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra.

**Lumbini:** It is the place where Lord Buddha was born.

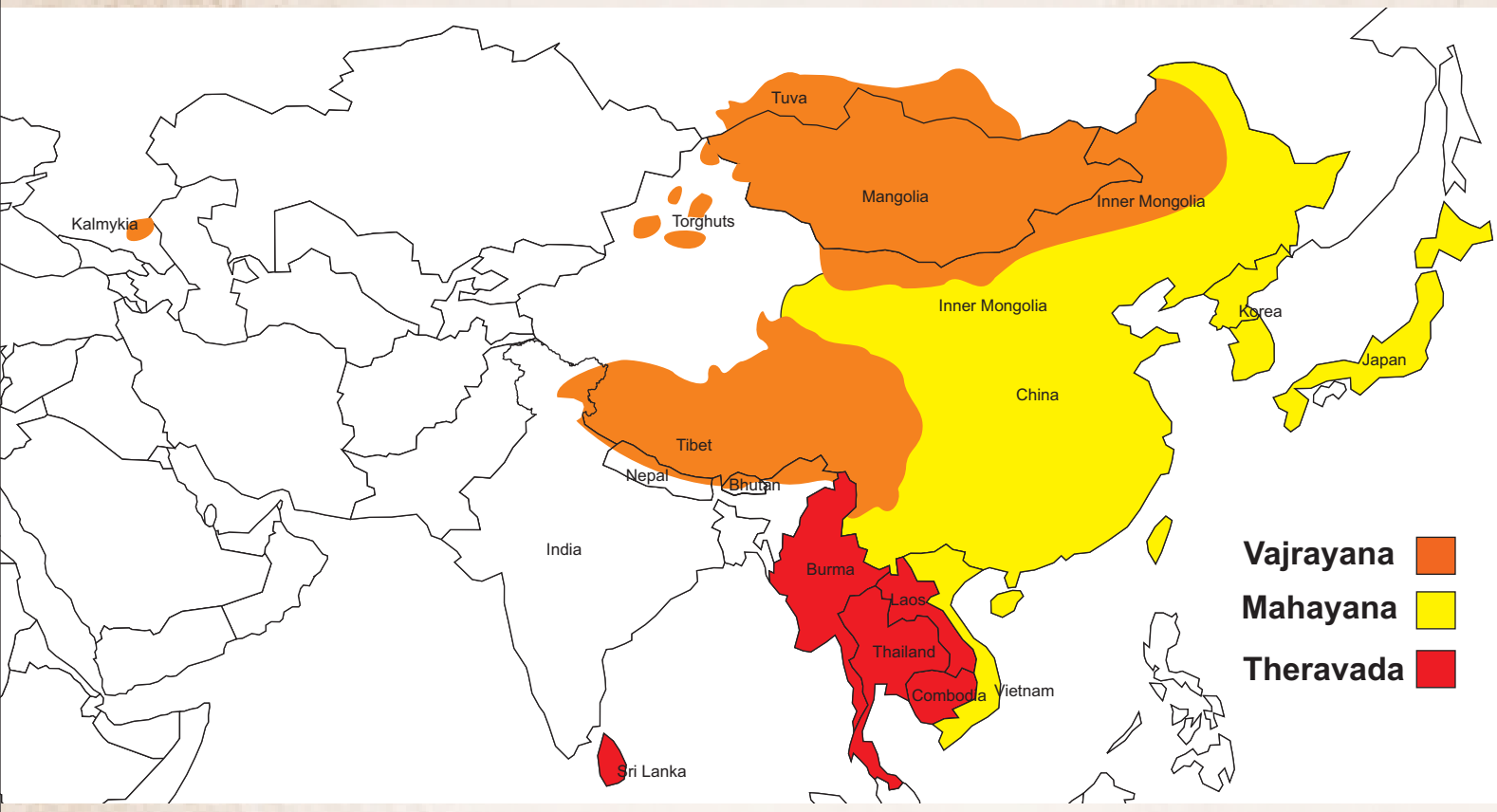
**Note:** Buddha is known in various Buddhist texts also as **Tathagata and Sakyamuni**. The predecessor of Buddha under Buddhism was Kassapa Buddha and his successor will be **Maitreya**.

## The four major schools developed under Buddhism are:

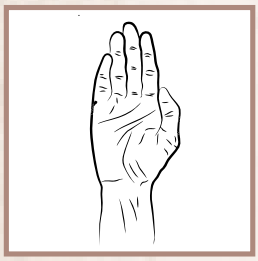
| Hinayana Buddhism | Mahayana Buddhism | Theravada Buddhism | Vajrayana Buddhism (Tantric Buddhism) |
|---|---|---|---|
| It means the **lesser vehicle** | It means the **greater vehicle.** | This is one of the sub-sects of Hinayana. **(Sthaviravada)** | This is one of the sub-sects of Mahayana. |
| It is more of an **orthodox school** | It is more liberal. | It refers to the school of **elder monks.** | It was influenced by Hinduism |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| It includes the followers of the **original preaching** of the Buddha. | It believes in the heavenliness of Buddha and **Bodhisattvas** embodying Buddha Nature. | The ultimate goal is the **cessation of the kleshas** and the attainment of the sublime state of **Nirvana** **Kleshas include states of mind such as anxiety, fear, anger, jealousy, desire, depression, etc.** | It involved combining Brahmanical (Veda based) rituals with Buddhist philosophies.The **main deity is Tara** (a lady). |
| **It did not believe in idol or image worship.** | **It believes in idol or image worship** of Buddha. | It believes in the concept of **vibhajjavada** i.e., "teaching of analysis". | It believes in **Tantra's, Mantras and Yantras.** |
| It believes in **individual salvation**. | It believes in **universal liberation** from suffering of all being. | It emphasises attaining self-Liberation through one's own efforts | Mantra is an easy and fastest path to achieve Buddhahood |
| Scholars used **Pali language** to interact with the masses | Scholars predominantly used **Sanskrit language** | **Pali** is sacred language of Theravada Buddhism. | Classical Tibetan is the main language used for students |
| **Emperor Ashoka** patronised **Hinayana** | **Emperor Kanishka** of Kushana dynasty is said to be the founder of Mahayana sect of Buddhism in 1st century AD | Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification) byBuddhaghosais the great treatise on this school. | |
| This school in its original form is almost **non-existent** in the present age. | A bodhisattva seeks complete enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. A bodhisattva who has accomplished this goal is called a **Samyaksaṃbuddha.** | | |

# Different Buddhists school being followed in different parts of the world.

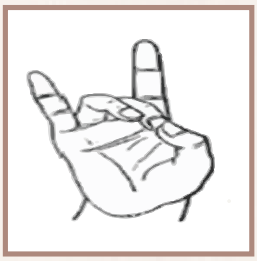



## Buddhist Mudras



Abhaya Mudra

Dhyana Mudra

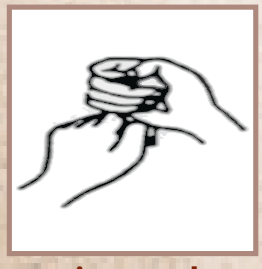


Karana Mudra

Bhumisparsha Mudra

Varada Mudra

Dharmachakra Mudra



Vajra Mudra

Vitarka Mudra

Cosmic Mudra

# Buddhist Terminologies

## Adhitthana

In Theravada Buddhism, adhiṭṭhāna is one of the ten "perfections", exemplified by the bodhisatta's resolve to become fully awakened.

## Agama

The non-Mahayana divisions of the SuttaPitaka

## Amitabha

The Buddha of the Western "Pure Land." Also known as Amida.

## Tathāgata

Gautama Buddha uses it when referring to himself in the Pāli Canon.

## Five Tathāgatas

These are a group of five **"self-born" celestial buddhas** who have always existed from the beginning of time. These are also known as Dhyani Buddha:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amoghasiddhi | Amitābha | Vairocana | Akshobhya | Ratnasambhava |

## Arhat

In Buddhism, an arhat (Sanskrit) or arahant (Pali) is a living person who has reached Enlightenment. Mahayana Buddhist traditions have used the term for people far advanced along the path of Enlightenment, but who may not have reached full Buddhahood.

## Bhāvacakra

The bhāvacakra is a symbolic representation of saṃsāra (or cyclic existence). It is found on the outside walls of Tibetan Buddhist temples.

## Bhante

This is used to refer to Buddhist monks in the Theravada tradition. Bhante literally means "Venerable Sir."

## Bodhisattvas

Bodhisattvas are enlightened beings who postpone their own salvation in order to help all sentient beings.

## Pure Land Buddhism

A broad branch of Mahayana Buddhism and one of the most widely practiced traditions of Buddhism in East Asia. Pure Land is a tradition of Buddhist teachings that are focused on the Buddha Amitābha.

# Buddhist Council

| Council | Year | Place | Headed By | Patron | Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st | 483 BC | **Rajgriha** | Mahakassapa | King Ajatasatru of Haryanka dynasty. | » Ananda composed the **Suttapitaka** (Buddha's Teachings)<br>» Mahakassapa composed the **Vinaypitaka** (monastic code). |
| 2nd | 383 BC | **Vaishali** | Sabakami | King Kalasoka of Sisunaga dynasty. | » The **first major split** happened here – two groups that would later evolve into Theravada and Mahayana.<br>» The split of the Buddhist order into **Sthaviravadinis** (Theravada) and **Mahasanghikas**. The split was over small points of monastic discipline. |
| 3rd | 250 BC | **Pataliputra** | Mogaliputta Tissa | Emperor Ashoka of Maurya dynasty. | » The **Abhidhamma Pitaka** was composed here making the almost completion of the modern Pali Tipitaka.<br>» Buddhist missionaries were sent to other countries. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4th | Around 1st century AD | **Kashmir** | Vasumitra and Ashvaghosha | King Kanishka of Kushan dynasty. | » Abhidhamma texts were translated from Prakrit to Sanskrit.<br>» Sarvasthivada doctrines were organized into three large commentaries on the Pitakas.<br>» **Final division of Buddhism into Mahayana & Hinayana** sects. |

**Note:**
The Theravada Buddhist council in 1871 and Theravada Buddhist council in 1954 are known as **Fifth and Sixth Buddhist Councils** respectively.

## Jainism

» Jain ismdoes not have a single founder, instead of that the truth comes to the numbers of teachers /**Tirthankaras** who propounded it at different time.

» **Major Jain pilgrimages** in India include Dilwara temple in **Mount Abu** (Rajasthan), **Palitana temples** (Gujarat), **Girnar** (Gujarat), **Shikharji** (Jharkhand) and **Shravanabelagola** (Karnataka)

» The 24 tirthankaras under Jainism are:
**Rishabhanatha or Adinatha**, Ajita, Sambhava, Abhinandana, Sumati, Padmaprabha, Suparshva, Chandraprabha, Suvidhi, Shital, Shreyansa, Vasupujya, Vimala, Ananta, Dharma, Shanti, Kunthu, Ara, Malli, Muni Suvrata, Nami, Nemi, **Parshvanatha and Mahavira**.

## Basics about Vardhamana Mahavira

» Prince **Vardhamana** was born at Kundalgram (540 BC) in Vaishali to King Siddhartha and Queen Trishala, who ruled over the **Jnatrika** clan.
» He found the truth of life, i.e., Kevalya near patna.
» Other Names: **Mahavira, jitendriya** etc.

## Jaina Teachings and Philosophy

» They believe that through **three-jewel (fold) path**, one can get rid of the bad karma and achieve salvation.

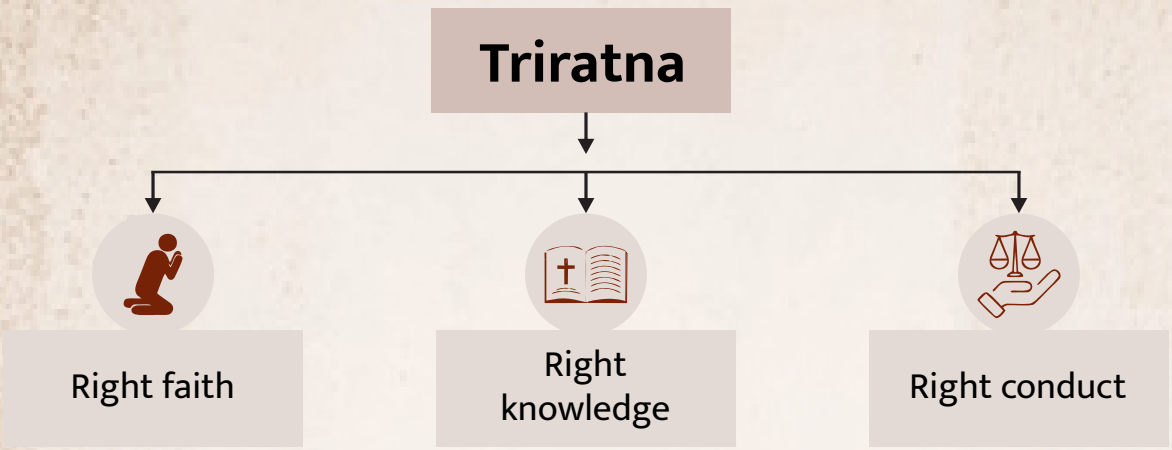
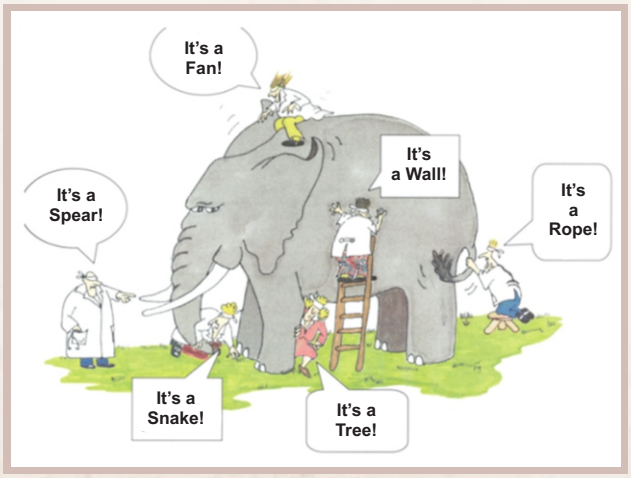


Figure: Auspicious symbol in Jainism

**Anekantavada**, the fundamental doctrine of Jainism emphasises that the ultimate truth and reality is complex, and has multiple aspects.

Hence there exists **non-absolutism**, that means no single, specific statement can describe the nature of existence and the absolute truth.

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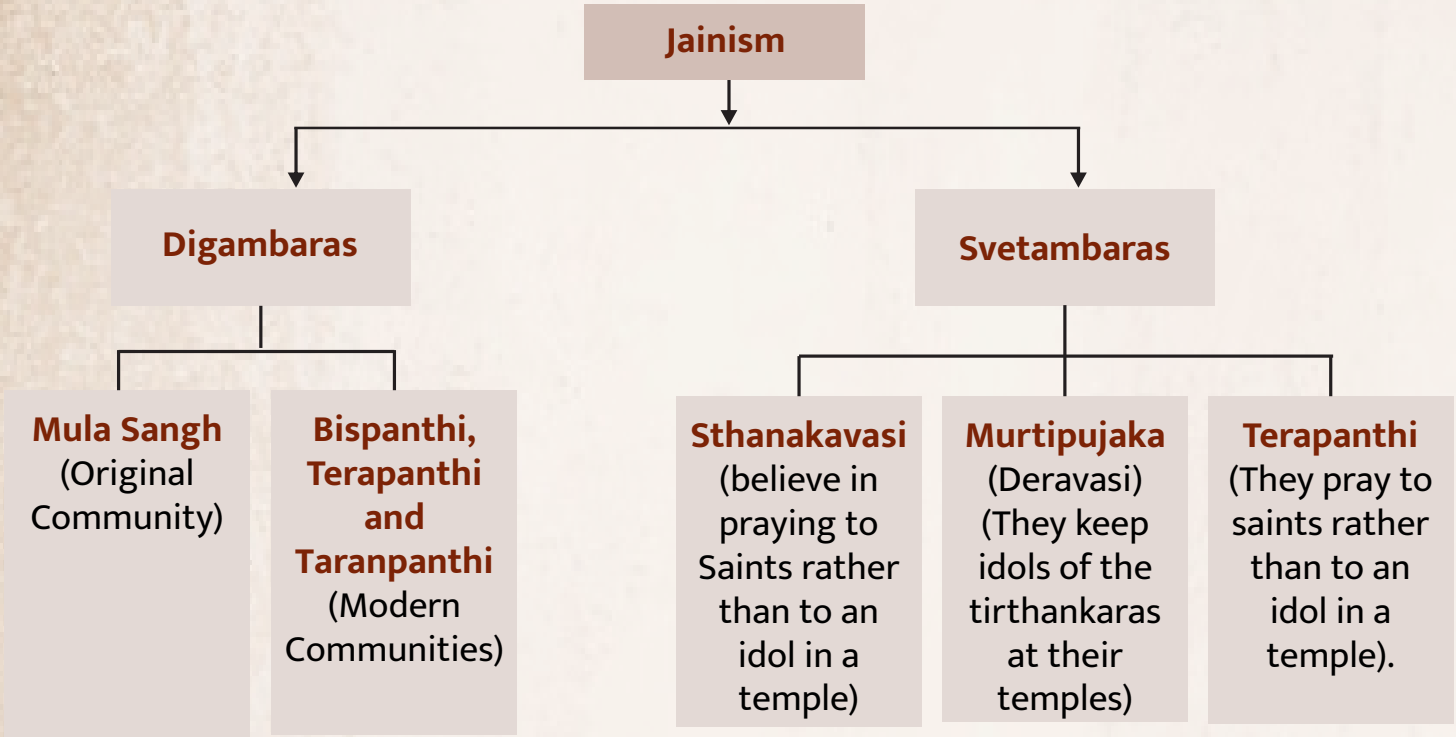
The epistemological and logical side that we can know only some aspects of reality and therefore all our judgements are necessarily relative, is called **Syadvada**.

The basic difference between them is that Anekantavada is the **knowledge** of all differing but opposite attributes whereas Syadavada is a **process of the relative description** of a particular attribute of an object or an event.

## Two major Schools or Sects under Jainism


Jainism
Digambaras
Svetambaras
Mula Sangh (Original Community)
Bispanthi, Terapanthi and Taranpanthi (Modern Communities)
Sthanakavasi (believe in praying to Saints rather than to an idol in a temple)
Murtipujaka (Deravasi) (They keep idols of the tirthankaras at their temples)
Terapanthi (They pray to saints rather than to an idol in a temple).

### Digambara School:

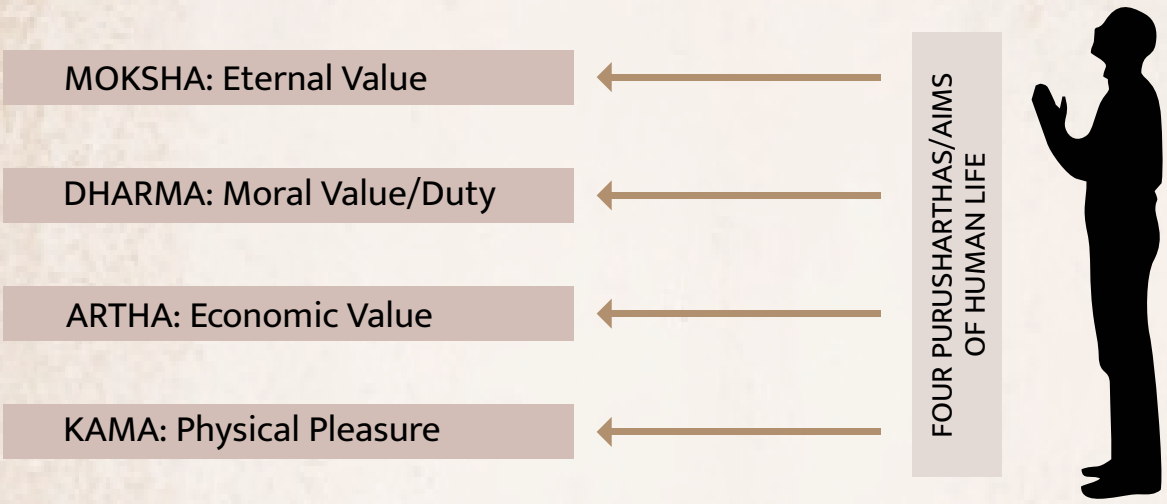
- Do not wear clothes.
- More rigid
- Follow all the **five constraints** (Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Aparigraha and Brahmacharya).
- Tirthankaras can be men only.
- Bhadrabahu was an exponent of Digambara sect.

### Svetambara School:

- Wear simple white clothing.
- Less Rigid
- Follow the preachings of Parsvanatha, i.e. they believe in only **four restraints** (except Brahmacharya) to be followed to attain Kevalya.
- Tirthankaras can be **men or women**,
- Sthulabhadra was a great exponent of this school and stayed in Magadha unlike Bhadrabahu who went to Karnataka.

# Hinduism

- The word Hindiusm acquired religious connotation only during British period.
- Earlier, it just indicated a group of people inhabiting around the region Indus.
- The basic ideological framework is derived from the Vedas.
- There were 4 goals (as shown in the given diagram) prescribed by the Hindu philosophers for the person practising the faith.




**Note:** The 4th goal **(Moksha)** was prescribed for the **1st time by Gautama Buddha** in 6th Century BC

# Six Schools of Hindu Philosophy

## Samkhya School

- Salvation can be attained through **real knowledge.**
- Propounder: **Kapila**
- Reality is constituted of 2 principles: Prakriti and Purusha.
- **Prakriti and Purusha** are supposed to be completely independent and absolute.
- Believe in dualism or dvaitvada

## Yoga School

- Salvation is possible through meditation.
- Founder – **Pantjali**
- It works towards systematic release of Purusha from Prakriti by purifying and controlling changes in mental mechanism.
- It means the union of two principal entities.
- Freedom can be attained through Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharna, Dhyana, Samadhi(Ashtangik Yoga).

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## Mimansa School

- Founder – **Jaimini**
- Salvation is possible through performing rituals. It is based on analysis of interpretation, application and use of the text of the Samhita and Brahmana portions of the Veda.
- It considers the philosophy of Vedas to be eternal and processes all knowledge, and religion means fulfillment of duties prescribed by the Vedas.
- Mimansa encompasses the Nyaya-Vaisheshika system.

## Vedanta School / Uttara Mimamsa

- Vedanta has it's root in **Vedas/ Upanishad** (Shruti)
- It is a spiritual philosophy which deals with the following three elements and relationship between them: (a)Brahman (b)Atman (c) World/Universe
- Different Vedanta schools/ philosophies explain the relation among above three entities/elements differently as 1.Identical [**non-duality**] 2.Different [**duality**]
- Different Schools of Vedanta Philoshophy Advaita Vedanta Vishishtadvaita Dvaita Shuddadvaita Achintya-Bheda-Abheda Dvaitadvaita

## Nyaya School

- Propounder: **Gautama**
- Salvation is possible **through logic** i.e. valid knowledge.
- It considered valid knowledge as real knowledge, that is knowledge of an object as it exists.
- It considered God as the one who creates, sustains and destroys the universe

## Vaisheshika School

- Propounder: **Kanada.**
- Salvation is possible through the recognition of the **atomic character** of the universe.
- It is a realistic and objective philosophy of universe.
- Objects of universe are composed of 5 elements: earth, water, air, fire and ether.
- It considers God to be the guiding principle. It believes in law of karma.

# Sub Schools of Vedanta

- **Bhedabheda** is a sub-school of Vedānta, which teaches that the individual self (jīvātman) is both different and not different from the ultimate reality known as Brahman.
  1. **Dvaitādvaita or Svabhavikabhedabheda** (dualistic non-dualism), founded by Nimbarka in the 7th century CE
  2. **Achintya Bheda Abheda** (inconceivable one-ness and difference), founded by **Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** (1486–1534 CE),propagated by Gaudiya Vaishnava.

» **Advaita (non-dualism)**, prominent scholars are Gaudapada (~500 CE) and Adi Shankaracharya (8th century CE).

Brahman alone, pure consciousness, is ultimately real and and the true self, atman is identical with Brahman.

» **Vishishtadvaita** (qualified nondualism), prominent scholars are **Nathamuni, Yāmuna and Ramanuja** (1017–1137 CE)

It is a non-dualistic school of Vedanta philosophy. Brahman alone is seen as the Supreme Reality, but is characterized by multiplicity.

» **Dvaita (dualism)**, founded by **Madhvacharya** (1199–1278 CE) God and the individual souls (jīvātman) exist as independent realities, and these are distinct.

» **Suddhadvaita** (purely non-dual), founded by **Vallabhacharya** (1479–1531 CE). Vallabhacharya's pure form (nondualist) philosophy is different from Advaita.

It sees equality in "essence" of the individual self with God. There is no real difference between the two (like the analogy of sparks to fire)

## Sikhism

» The history of Sikhism commences with the life, times and teachings of Guru Nanak (1469-1539).

- He was a non-conformist, giving an alternative way of socio-religious organisation of hisfollowers.
- For him, the supreme purpose of human existence was salvation. This salvation would be achieved by right belief, right worship and right conduct which are all taught by the guru.
- He developed new forms of worship like community kitchen (langar).

» Initially the Mughal-Sikh relations were very cordial, but the execution of fifth **Guru Arjan Dev** on Jahangir's orders became a causeof dispute.

» The **sixth Guru Hargobind (1606-44) set a trend of militancy**. The Guru transformed the Sikh CULTinto Sikh CORPS. He constructed the **Akal Takht**.

» The next two Gurus, **Guru Har Rai** and Guru Har **Krishan** were in constant conflict and were eventually detained by Aurangzeb. Guru **Teg Bahadur** was also one of those in line for establishing the sovereign authority of the Sikhs in the dominions.

» The last physical guru was **Guru Gobind Singh** after whose death, the system of **'personal gurushiр'** came to an end and the authority of the Gurus was transferred to **Guru Granth** and Guru Panth.

» Guru Gobind Singh also started through the rite of initiation the **KHALSA** who were markedly different from the non-Khalsa Sikhs who came to be called Sahajdhari Sikhs.

## Zoroastrianism

- This religion has its origin in Persia by the prophet **Zarathustra** around **6-7 BCE**.
- They are a monotheistic religion who believe in **one eternal god** whose name is **Ahura**.
- The first contact of the Zoroastrians with **India** was in **936 AD** when they fleed from Iran because of the Islamic invasions. They are commonly known as **Parsis**.
- Their **fire temples are** called **Atash Bahram** country.Their sacred text called **Zend Avesta** .
- They **worship fire** but also consider air, water and earth to be sacred elements.

## Abrahamic Religion

The Abrahamic religious, also referred to as Abrahamism, are a group of monotheistic religious that claim to worship the God of **Abraham**, including **Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Baha Faith**. The group is named after the prophet and patriarch Abraham, who is mentioned in the scriptures including the Torah, Tanakh, Bible, and Quran.

## Judaism

- Judaism is a monotheistic religion that believes in **one God**.
- It is one of the oldest religions.
- The Jews believe in **Yahweh** or the one true God who was instituted by Abraham.
- Their religious book is called the **Torah**, which is also the first five books of the Old Testament or Bible.
- **Talmud** is compilations of legal and ethical writings and a brief history of Jewish history.
- They have separate prayer halls and synagogues (place for worship).
- They follow religious services called the Eliyahu-hanavior the thanksgiving to Elijah the Prophet.

## Christianity

- It was founded by Jesus Christ in **Jerusalem**.
- The basic philosophy of Christianity is the existence of **one God** who created the Universe.
- Jesus was a messenger who wanted to help people to find God and become their 'saviour'.
- Christians worship the **Holy Trinity**: the father (God), the son (Jesus) and the Holy ghost.
- The sacred text of the Christians is the **Bible**. It contains portions of the **Old Testament** of the Jews and the **New Testament**.
- Main Practice: **Baptism** where a child or any individual **enters the church's service**. Another practice is called **Eucharist** or breaking bread and wine with God which signifies unity with the being.
- There were **two stages** of the spread of Christianity in India: the first was in the **medieval period** and the second was during the **18th century Missionary work** under the aegis of the British.

# Islam

- Islam was originated in the Arabian Peninsula in the **7th century AD**.
- The word 'Islam' connotes **'submission' to God**.
- The basic tenants of Islam are that there is only **one Allah** (manifestation of god) who sent his messenger to help the people on Earth.
- Prophet Muhammad was the last in the long lines of messengers sent by God on earth like Abraham, Moses, etc.
- Islam also believe in the **Day of Judgment** where the merits and bad deeds will be judged.
- The sayings or day to day teachings of Prophet Muhammad were compiled by his followers after his death and is called **Hadith**.
- The holy book of **Quran** was compiled before prophet's death.
- Quran and **Sunnah** form the basis for Islamic laws or **Sharia**.
- According to Prophet,one has to give a portion of their earnings to the needy and the poor that is called **Zakat** or charity.
- Two major sub-divisions of Islam are: **Shia** (those who believe Prophet's successor should be from his own flesh) and **Sunni**.

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